Outstanding amount of MTNL

3222. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total outstanding amount which MTNL has to recover from the subscribers;

(b) in what manner the amount has been allowed to accumulate when the telephone of an average subscriber is disconnected on non-payment of a bill; and

(c) whether any responsibility has been fixed against the officers in this regard, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Total outstanding amount which MTNL has to recover from the subscribers is Rs. 1509.01 crores as on 31.10.2005.

(b) MTNL follows a prescribed procedure evolved over a long period of operation for the payment of bills and recovery of outstanding dues. Disconnection of telephone is also resorted to after all options to recover the outstanding amount have failed as per the prescribed procedure. Matter is pursued to recover the amount even after the disconnection of the telephone. Recently, agents have also been appointed to recover the outstanding dues. It may be mentioned that above outstanding is total oustanding amount since inception of the department.

(c) As a prescribed procedure is followed to recover the dues, individual responsibility can not be fixed.

Growth of telecome service in rural areas

3223. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Telecom Regulatory Authority of India nas released recommendations on growth of telecom service in rural India;

(b) whether according to regulator it is recognized that without focus on rural areas, sizeable growth in telecom sector would not be possible